



Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen Minutes
Thursday, October 29, 2020 –5:00 p.m.
VIA TELECONFERENCE

Meetings normally held at the Municipal Offices are being held remotely, with adequate, alternative means of public access and, where required, public participation provided, in accordance with the Governor's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c.30A § 20.

Board of Selectmen: Chair Charles Sokol, Selectman Ed Silva, Vice-Chair Joanne Semanie
Staff: Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary, Paul McLatchy III, Administrative Assistant to the Boards,
Audience of Citizens: Rosie Gordon

Call to Order: Chair Sokol called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

Roll Call Vote: Chair Sokol- yes Ed Silva- yes Vice-Chair Semanie- yes (Vote: 3-0-0)

Announcement of recording devices: one

Noteworthy Announcements (as needed): It was noted that longtime resident Florence Veber passed away at her home on October 21st. Florence was very active in the town serving on committees and was a Rowe town employee. She will be sadly missed.

Minutes:

1. Minutes of October 13, 2020- Covid Group:
2. Minutes of October 20, 2020- Covid Group:

MOTION TO APPROVE: Chair Sokol made a motion to approve the Minutes of Covid Group meetings of October 13, 2020 and October 20, 2020. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie.

Roll Call Vote: Chair Sokol- yes Vice-Chair Semanie- yes (Vote: 2-0-1)
Ed Silva- abstained from the vote.

3. Minutes of October 15, 2020:
4. Minutes of October 20, 2020- Roundtable:
5. Minutes of October 26, 2020 – Emergency Meeting:

MOTION TO APPROVE: Chair Sokol made a motion to approve the Minutes of October 15, October 20, 2020 as amended and Emergency Meeting on October 26, 2020. The motion was seconded by Selectman Silva.

Roll Call Vote: Chair Sokol- yes Ed Silva- yes Vice-Chair Semanie- yes
(Vote: 3-0-0)

Selectboard Business:

New Business:

1. Discuss FY22 Budget Process: Chair Sokol reported that Finance Committee Chair Wayne Zavotka contacted him and inquired about Selectmen's involvement in the FY22 Budget process. Following discussion, Selectmen decided they would like to be involved in the budget process and ask that the meetings be scheduled on Thursdays to allow for a regular meeting to follow.
2. Town Operations and Covid Safety Measures: Chair Sokol said that in light of the confirmed positive cases of COVID 19 in Rowe, that departments should be prepared to have plans in place should a member of their department either tests positive for the virus or must quarantine. Working remotely was discussed. It was agreed to continue to have each department work on plans and discuss further at the next meeting.
3. Retirees Insurance Sign on Policy: Executive Secretary said that there was an inquiry from a town retiree asking to add a dental policy to their retirement insurance coverage and it precipitated discussion about whether there was a policy in place for retirees who were not on town plans at the time of retirement who wanted to sign on at a later date. Following discussion, it was decided administrative staff would work on some policies and present them to Selectmen for review and decision.

Old Business:

1. Highway Superintendent- Comp Time Follow-up: Administrative Assistant followed up prior discussions of the comp time for Highway Superintendent and presented an average of the overtime worked each year. Based on the 344 hours of overtime, rather than compensation of time, which he cannot reasonably take, since he is in the category of employees who have 5 weeks of vacation. In practice, taking such a huge amount of time would be difficult, so the proposal is to provide paid compensation for the overtime to reflect more accurately what he works. Selectmen Silva said he thought the Superintendent was at the top of the pay scale for DPW workers for the size of the dept. and the length of roads. Selectman Silva compared the Highway Superintendent's salaries of several towns of comparable size:
 - Colrain at \$67,236 Bernardston at \$66,000
 - Buckland at \$80,000 Erving at \$63,000
 - Charlemont at \$59,000

Chair Sokol summarized the decisions:

- a. Provide comp time or not?
- b. Is Highway Superintendent Compensated appropriately?
- c. Based on other towns, is he paid well – should we freeze pay?

No decisions were made at this time. It was decided to look into the possibility of having a study performed to review town positions to survey whether compensation is adequate and possibly evaluate implementing a 'step' system as the school has for ranking pay scale according to responsibilities assigned to a particular position. Administrative staff was asked to look into possibilities for such a study.

Contracts/Warrants:

1. Warrant Review: Review Warrants FY21 W09 and FY21 PW9: Vice-Chair Semanie said that there was some funds transferred from Stabilization to cover bills and that with the tax bills having just been mailed, cash flow should not pose an issue.
2. Donation and License Agreement ("Burn House" Training): Town Counsel reviewed and amended the Donation and License Agreement for the Williams "Burn House" to be used in Fire Dept. training. Executive Secretary presented a Certificate of Insurance from our town insurance MIIA. Following review, Chair Sokol said the owner requested an amendment be made to item number 10, since to her knowledge there was no hazardous waste on the premises. It was decided to have Town Counsel review the request before finalizing. Selectman Silva asked whether an end date could be added to the agreement, so a completion date could be near. It was decided to request it be completed by May 1, 2021.

Administrative Office Updates:

- Administrative Assistant Updates:
 - Selectmen reviewed the Administrative Assistant updates presented.
 - Mr. McLatchy III said the Ethics Commission notified him that their review of a complaint brought against him has been officially closed.
 - The Green Communities annual report was submitted in the event the town wished to apply for a grant in the future.
 - The Municipal Vulnerability Plan would probably take place in the latter part of November. McLatchy III said he is writing a series of articles for the Goal Post to engage citizens in the process.
 - McLatchy III asked whether he could covert the Veteran's Day holiday to vacation hours to be used later since the holiday is his normal day off.

MOTION TO CONVERT TIME: Chair Sokol made a motion to accept the request of Administrative Assistant to convert the Veteran's Day Holiday to vacation hours to be used later. The motion was seconded by Selectman Silva.

Roll Call Vote: Chair Sokol- yes Ed Silva- yes Vice-Chair Semanie- yes (Vote: 3-0-0)

- Executive Secretary Updates:
 - Selectmen reviewed the Executive Secretary Updates presented.
 - Ms. Boudreau reported working with the Treasurer to bring the office up to date as things have been neglected for some time. The focus now is to close out FY20 and bring accounts in balance with the Accountant's.
 - Insurance Grant: Ms. Boudreau said that she met with MIIA insurance rep. who came out to work on a grant for an off-site monitoring system for the school to alert of a heating or plumbing issue.
 - Phone Booth: Ms. Boudreau picked up materials to repair the glass in the phone booth and Highway Superintendent installed them.
 - EMD Follow-up: Ms. Boudreau spoke with Fire Chief about the EMD interview and he said he would follow up with a phone call to the applicant to discuss in greater detail and report back.

Unforeseen Business (within preceding 48 hours): None

Future Meeting(s):

Chair Sokol said the next meeting would be on November 12, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. Discussion to include: EMD Position, the Final "Burn House" Agreement review, continue to add 'Town Procedures Responding to Covid-19' to the Agenda, Insurance Policies regarding retirees.

Adjournment:

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:16 p.m.
The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie.

Roll Call Vote: Chair Sokol- yes Ed Silva- yes Vice-Chair Semanie- yes
(Vote: 3-0-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary

Approval Date: NOVEMBER 12, 2020

Approved:



Chuck Sokol, Chair



Ed Silva, Selectman



Joanne Semanie, Vice-Chair

Documents:

1. Agenda October 29, 2020
2. Minutes of October 13, 2020
3. Minutes of October 15, 2020
4. Minutes of October 20, 2020- Covid Group
5. Minutes of October 20, 2020 – Roundtable
6. Minutes of October 27, 2020 – Emergency Meeting
7. Larned- Comp Time
8. Donation and License Agreement – ("Burn House")
9. MIIA Certificate of Insurance
10. Administrative Assistant Updates
11. Executive Secretary Updates

Mail:

1. Nuclear Regulatory Commission re: Inspection Report